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ELEGY,
SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN ON
REVISITING THE PLACE
OF
A FORMER RESIDENCE.

Οὐκ ἴσθ' ἀποιὸν φρεσὶν τὰδ ἔδην

Eurip. Med.

Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam.

HOR.

By JOHN BIDLAKE, A. B.
CHAPLAIN to his ROYAL HIGHNESS
The DUKE of CLARENCE.

The SECOND EDITION.

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TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF CLARENCE.

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ELLY



JOHN B. BROWN
1871

RECORD BOOK

1871

E L E G Y.

WITH ling'ring steps, irresolute and slow,
(While struggling passions rend my wounded
breast,)

Those scenes I seek, where once unknown to woe,
My fondest hopes were crown'd, my cares had rest.

Here once again let recollection trace,
In all the luxury of unmark'd grief,
The interesting features of the place,
And give the swelling passions free relief.

Now full ten tedious years have roll'd away,
And time applied its kind and lenient balm;
Tumultuous grief in reason finds allay,
But settles in a melancholy calm.

B

Ah!

Ah! scenes of vanish'd bliss! How sweet were you!
 What tranquil pleasures did ye once bestow!
 Which now with chang'd sensations I review,
 Of poignant pain, of agonizing woe!

Here my Serena's presence cheer'd each day;
 Here night no solitary horrors spread;
 Here smiling hours flew unperceiv'd away,
 With wonder oft encreasing how they fled!

Here did I hope my latest hours to spend,
 Far from the cumb'rous pomp of state or pride;
 To shun the haughty, with some modest friend,
 And spread my door to virtuous mis'ry wide.

Here did I hope with fond parental care,
 To see my offspring's mental blossoms rise,
 With my Serena, in the task to share,
 And train the blooming infants for the skies.

Such

Such were my hopes—But ah! how soon they fled!
 E'er since a painful void of bliss I've known:
 In her mourn'd loss, all sense of joy is dead,
 And all the buds of hope, nipt, yet unblown.

How oft with transport was my bosom fir'd,
 When near this happy seat of peace I drew;
 When of the faithless forms of friendship tir'd,
 Th' abode of solid pleasures met my view.

How was I pleas'd to see the smoke ascend,
 In many a rolling Volume, light and blue;
 How pleas'd to see yon grove's thick branches bend,
 And hide my mansion from the public view.

When the last streaks of flow receding light,
 Above the dusky hills, were faintly seen,
 When the pale glow-worm shone serenely bright,
 And gradual darkness veil'd the rural scene.

When

When Nature's softness harmoniz'd my mind,
 How was I charm'd my pleasing home too seek;
 How charm'd congratulating love to find,
 With sweetness unaffected, soft and meek.

How pleas'd amidst the dark tempestuous night,
 When in the howling storm returning late,
 To see my window shed the taper's light,
 And hear the watch-dog barking at the gate.

Pleas'd to anticipate with fond desire,
 (Whilst all around was dreary, cold, and wild)
 The circling pleasures of the ev'ning fire,
 Where friendship met, and love connubial smil'd.

There oft around our sportive infants play'd,
 There oft we smil'd their harmless arts to see;
 There oft with fond exchanging looks survey'd,
 The traits of nature undisguis'd and free.

Then

Then as I saw each young and budding grace,
 " Shall e'er such innocence and truth be lost?
 I cried: (whilst fearful tears bedew'd my face)
 Shall these on life's tempestuous seas be tost.

Then would I clasp the infants to my arms,
 And with an anxious parent's warmth exclaim;
 O save them gracious Heav'n from future harms!
 O save them from the sense of guilty pain!

But gentle mercy's parent heard my prayer,
 In that safe way, which wisdom deem'd the best;
 Heav'n has made them its peculiar care,
 Snatch'd them from guilt and pain to endless rest.

Be still my heart! and ye my sorrows cease!
 They might have liv'd to infamy betray'd;
 They might have thus embitter'd all our peace;
 And all our cares ingratitude repaid.

Farewell

Farewell ye scenes of literary ease!
 Where once I hop'd in softest peace to live;
 Ye now have lost your wonted pow'r to please:
 For what but sad remembrance can ye give?

Yon garden once did share a mutual toil;
 How did its tender nurselings claim our care!
 How did each grateful produce of the soil,
 Repay with beauty and with fragrance chear!

How oft where winds the path on yonder hill,
 With many a loit'ring step we sought the brow,
 As Ev'ning purpled o'er the Landscape still,
 Enraptur'd gazing on th' expanse below.

There varied objects charm'd th' admiring sight,
 The brightly catching lights, with broader shades,
 The wide extending waters blushing bright,
 The rich and winding vales with swelling glades.

Ascending

Ascending then, we saw new mountains glow,
 In vast succession spread the op'ning view;
 Retreating objects, which seem'd near below,
 With intervening spaces distant grew.

From nature then to moralizing led,
 " Thus hope (we said) deceives our reason's eyes;
 " Illuded in its paths, we onward tread,
 " While distant bliss retreating fades and flies."

" But blest is he no vagrant wish who knows,
 " And vain and fruitless are the sons of care;
 Then as we turn'd to were our cottage rose,
 We smiling said, " sure certain bliss is there."

As now encreasing darkness round me falls,
 And pitying night distills its weeping dew,
 Beneath this Gothic pile, these ivy'd walls,
 Unseen I'll bid their lov'd remains adieu.

O silent

O silent spot, which now contain'st my all!
Long may thy unmolested verdure grow!
Low mourning on thy yielding turf I fall,
And bid my unrestrained sorrows flow.

O my Serena once so soft and fair,
Let this last tribute to thy shade be paid!
Hear thou these sighs, if thou perchance canst hear
E'er yet my dust with thine in peace be laid.

Through varied life thy image never fades,
Nor ever lessens in the mental eye.
On thee I dwell in solitary shades;
Nor lose thee when to crowded scenes I fly.

If in the nightly splendour of the ball
I move, where rival fair ones proudly vie,
I trace thy well known beauties in them all,
And sadly seek some solitude to sigh.

If

If into foreign climes I vainly roam,
 And novelty from varied objects try,
 My busy thoughts reseek their wonted home
 And sicken at the vain variety.

If on the cloud-capt Alpine summits tread,
 Where winds the passage on the mountain's brow,
 Where wildest nature's awful desarts spread,
 And roaring cataracts dreadful dash below :

These solemn scenes of sadness suit my mind ;
 Their awful wildness wakes my wilder woe ;
 And thus the mournful source of grief I find ;
 And ev'ry object pains where'er I go.

When music breathes its dying plaintive sounds,
 With sweetly melting notes, in movements flow,
 Respondent feelings give their deepest wounds,
 My sighs revibrate, and my sorrows flow.

Be

Be still—For thus 'tis impious to repine!
 Here it is vain to hope for lasting peace!
 Others may feel severer woes than mine;
 And all complaints and pain will shortly cease.

Misfortune's woes find ease in reason's aid,
 And kind Religion shews a better world;
 But the sad wretch who is by vice betray'd,
 In wildest tempests of despair is hurl'd.

Though that fine form entomb'd and faded lies,
 Her bright example still remains in view;
 My Guardian Angel now she gilds the skies,
 And guides the path she taught me to pursue.

And when we meet in endless joys above,
 How shall my ardent soul with rapture glow,
 With her who sooth'd my mortal hours with love,
 And taught me all the bliss of Heav'n to know!

F I N I S.

